

PROJECT

This department welcomes brief notes and article-length manuscripts. The former may include announcements of contemplated ongoing projects, information on doctoral theses in progress or completed (writer, title, institution, supervisor, and available information on completion time), proposals and questions, and requests for assistance. Announcements of individual research projects, including theses, are very important to avoid awkward and wasteful duplication of effort. Articles will ordinarily describe projected, in progress, or completed large-scale projects involving one or several scholars and should follow the same standards as other articles.

The Research Group on History of Mathematics at the Federal University of Paraná

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This report reviews the activities of a research group working at the Department of Mathematics of the Federal University of Paraná. Permanent members of this group are Dr. Clóvis Pereira da Silva, scientific supervisor; Dr. Alvino Moser; Dr. Ubiratan D'Ambrosio; Dr. Potiguara A. Pereira; Dr. Circe Mary Silva da Silva; M.Sc. Edson Andretta; M.Sc. Maria Salett Biembengut. The group is engaged in activities which are fully described below.

This research group focuses mainly on the history of Brazilian mathematics (university and secondary school levels), as it is important for Brazilian scientists to rescue our scientific heritage as a country of the third world. The Curitiba group is studying, for instance, the influence of Comte's positivist ideology in the development of Brazilian mathematics from 1850 to 1930. The group is also studying the impact of various foreign mathematicians who came to Brazil from 1934 onward, such as Luigi Fantappiè (a student of Volterra), Giacomo Albanese, Gabrielle Mammana, Luigi Sobrero, André Weil, Oscar Zariski, Jean Dieudonné, Alexander Grothendieck, Jean A.F. Delsarte, Antônio A. Ribeiro Monteiro, and Manuel Zaluar Nunes, among others.

A third theme of particular interest concerns the contributions of such figures as Joaquim Gomes de Sousa, Otto de Alencar Silva, Manoel Amoroso Costa, Lélío Gama, and Theodoro A. Ramos to the development of Brazilian science. A related project will be to organize the scientific papers and other documents of

Brazilian mathematicians. This project is under the direction of Dr. Pereira da Silva in collaboration with archivists from the Federal University of Paraná.

The guiding idea behind these efforts is to trace some fundamental trends which can be detected in the historical development of European science when seen within the context of the physical and mathematical sciences, and to study various attempts to transfer these same patterns to the Brazilian context during the 19th century.

Beginning with the academic year 1993, the Curitiba group has organized a seminar on the history of Brazilian mathematics. Several leading mathematicians plan to promote the exchange of ideas among mathematicians and historians of mathematics.

The research group is interested in establishing working relationships with foreign scientists, in particular Portuguese and Italian scientists. Moreover, the Curitiba group wishes to maintain contact with research groups on the history of mathematics in other countries.